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Introduction

For far too many of our students, the predictability of success or failure in public education has correlated with race, class, and ethnicity. Systemic inequities have led to the lack of opportunities to maximize a student’s full academic potential.

The MNPS Equity Roadmap is a response to the urgent need to reverse the longstanding inequities within our school system. This roadmap acknowledges that MNPS operates within the larger societal norms that consistently create racially and socially predictable and persistent inequitable outcomes. To change these inequities, the MNPS Equity Roadmap challenges us all to shift our ideological commitment to become equity leaders by centering the needs of historically marginalized students and their families first at the forefront.

To achieve equity within our district, we must take a targeted approach to eliminating the racialized outcomes caused by structural racism and classism. The roadmap aligns a three- to five-year plan to address the inequities which occur as a result of societal and institutional racism and classism. We will boldly emphasize the needs, experiences and outcomes for students who identify as:

- **Black or African descent, Hispanic/Latinx, Asian, and Indigenous or American Indian.**

We will also evaluate the experiences of students at intersections of race who identify with the following labels or identities:

- **Immigrant, Refugee, English Language Learner, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and/or Queer, Economically Disadvantaged, Special Education, Physical or Mental Disability, Homeless or Highly Mobile.**

The primary objective of the MNPS Equity Roadmap is to better assist and support schools, district leaders, and central office personnel in taking an intentional approach to achieve equity—equity that is, by definition, systemic. Working towards equity requires ongoing action and continuous improvement, hence the MNPS definition of equity centers “ways,” or practices, to operationalize theory into day-to-day department practice and classroom action.

Over the next three to five years, we will simultaneously refine and activate elements of the roadmap so it provides a common vision, language, and an approach for driving change at every level of our organization. We will work to heavily incorporate data to make quality decisions based on real-time information that humanizes our student population beyond the numbers.

To achieve equity, educators and administrators must know the students they teach, understand which pedagogies and resources each student needs to thrive, and remain attuned to how quantitative and qualitative data reflect outcomes. Our work of adapting teaching and learning must adhere to a “do now and build towards” equity mindset shift. Our “do now” activities are the practical in the near-term actions designed to lay the foundation for bold and transformative work to follow— the “build toward.” This sets the North Star vision which chronicles how students, families, and educators will experience school post COVID-19.

We will investigate the current systems and student outcomes. Our focus is to establish new systems and structures to ensure...
The MNPS Equity Roadmap will be grounded at its core by these essential questions:

1. What are we doing to create the conditions for children to develop and grow?
2. How can we increase transparency and engagement, resulting in better, sustainable outcomes and productive relationships?
3. What do you understand about the history and people in our school community?
4. What is happening here now? What are the inequities in our system we seek to address?
5. Who is situated farthest from opportunity, and what do we understand about their experience and context? What are the structural barriers that exist?
6. What have young people and families shared about their experiences in our system, and how are the data informing our actions?
7. Where in our current system is there an opening, momentum, or demand for action that will have a meaningful impact on student experience and learning?
8. Which domain commitments and core practices are within your sphere of influence, and where do you have capacity and expertise? What do we need to learn?

Our MNPS Equity Roadmap is the product of:

1. Extensive and ongoing dialogue with educators, students, parents, caregivers, and community members; numerous school visits; and active participation across institutional departments and staff listening sessions
2. Reviewing current national research on educational equity and root causes of inequity across various school districts, cities, and levels of government.
3. Collaboration with key partners in the fields of educational equity, SEL, and culturally responsive pedagogy. [Racial Equity Institute, (Collaborative for Academic and Social Emotional Learning) CASEL, BELE Network, Initiative for Race Research and Justice at Vanderbilt Peabody, National Equity Project, etc.]
How to utilize this roadmap guidance

This roadmap is a flexible tool designed as a guide to support school, district, and community leaders who can apply the necessary expertise in achieving the academic success of all students. This roadmap and concurrent framing associated with it do not aim to dictate a singular particular strategy or approach. Rather, it acknowledges and connects the various strategies and programs in which the school can engage in.

Our Educational Equity Roadmap seeks to guide the district as we establish organizational priorities, adopt policies and procedures, engage in day-to-day decision-making, implement best outcome programming, develop staff competencies, evaluate our processes and procedures, select curriculum, and communicate with internal and external members of our education community

The MNPS Educational Equity Roadmap can be used:

- By district leadership to clarify and align decision-making with our district’s equity values and shared beliefs
- By school leaders to assess and plan for creation and expansion of educational equity at individual school locations (ex: create equity teams, plan professional development, plan family/school partnerships, assess resource allocation decisions)
- By school staff to engage with students and families around the district’s equity values, goals and core tenets
- By teachers for curriculum reflection or to create personal professional development plans
- By families to share with schools, administration, and staff their needs, hopes, and dreams for their students

The MNPS Educational Equity Roadmap charges us to:

- Operationalize educational equity by increasing the amount and the delivery models of culturally responsive teaching via consistent and ongoing professional development
- Assess for and require culturally responsive curriculum and instruction
- Assess the diversity, equity, and inclusive impact of decisions
- Enhance our community partnerships in an authentic manner
- Create respectful and collaborative relationships with students and families
Our Shared Purpose

**OUR WHY**
It is our shared responsibility to ensure every student in every Nashville neighborhood and community has access to a high-quality educational institution.

**OUR WHAT**
The Roadmap is the foundation for achieving equity within our district, and guides our commitment to equity at the organizational and personal level. The Roadmap is the guiding star for us to ensure we provide every young person with a personalized learning experience based on their school context.

**OUR HOW**
The Roadmap provides shared language, tools, a comprehensive equity lens, and an implementation guide for an equity framing which aligns transformation strategies within five core domains of change to ensure every student is known and has a personalized learning experience based on their school context.

**MISSION**
To support the district in consistent and equitable resource allocation, evaluation, development, and implementation of the necessary tools, policies, and practices to achieve racial and social equity for students, teachers, staff, and the community, regardless of race, ability, socioeconomic status, language, religion, sexual orientation, sex, national origin, or gender identity.

**VISION**
To provide a high-quality education for all children, regardless of their race, zip code, ability, or country of origin where every child is championed for their individual cultures, identities, abilities, languages, and interests.
The overarching goal of The Metro Nashville Public Schools Equity Roadmap is to achieve racial equity within the school district. In order for us to achieve this goal, we must be clear about the goal toward which we are working. The following key definitions outline equity within MNPS.

Equity within Metro Nashville Public Schools

Educational Equity: (Both process and outcome)

Every student receives what they need, when they need it, to develop to their full academic and social potential regardless of their race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, language, religion, family background, or family income.

WORKING TOWARDS EDUCATIONAL EQUITY MEANS THAT WE ENGAGE IN THE FOLLOWING PRACTICES AND BEHAVIORS:¹

- Promoting fair inclusion and creating the conditions in which each person participates, prospers, and reaches their full potential;
- Interrupting inequitable practices, examining biases, and creating inclusive school environments for each student and their family;
- Taking accountability for historic inequities and advancing solutions to address root causes of those issues through an equity-based continuous improvement approach; and
- Discovering and cultivating the unique gifts, talents, and interests which every student possesses.

¹Educational Equity Definition — National Equity Project
Racial Equity:

A combination of processes, initiatives and outcomes that eliminate all forms of racial oppression and co-create conditions that enable those most impacted by structural inequity to reach their full potential.

Guiding examples

- Final ABCs of Equity (leadershipacademy.org)
- Racial Equity & Inclusion Framework - The Annie E. Casey Foundation (aecf.org)
- Race & Education: Supporting Leadership Diversity and Anti-Racism in Education Change - The Leadership Academy

Intersectionality

Intersectionality identifies how the nature of social categories such as a race, class, gender, as well other individual characteristics intersect with each other and overlap to create systems of discrimination and disadvantage some.

As we continue to expand districtwide awareness of our equity challenges and our continuous improvement process to equitize schools, it is important we continue to reiterate the intersectionality of the components to system wide change. Each of these individual elements factor.

The purpose of looking through this lens is to improve the predictability of our actions in relation to a desired outcome. Viewing equity shifts from this lens allows educators and administrators to increase the likelihood of successfully reaching a given set of objectives as we identify what is happening and what action we need to take from multiple perspectives.

Lens of Systemic Oppression — National Equity Project
What is a Leader for Equity? ³

A leader for equity works to eliminate opportunity and achievement gaps and ensure success for all students by identifying and addressing personal and institutional bias and barriers, as well as providing strategies to ensure all students have equitable access to:

- Effective, culturally responsive educators
- Rigorous instruction and engaging learning opportunities
- Social, academic, and community supports
- Resources to ensure success

The Hallmarks of Equitable Leaders

Equitable leaders are culturally responsible leaders who provide rigorous instruction and engaging learning opportunities for all students. Within MNPS, we will work to build equitable leaders who understand equity, systemic disparities, intersectionality, and embody the following characteristics:

- A Culturally Responsive Leader displays individual values and behaviors that enable them to engage in effective interactions/relationships among students, educators, and the diverse communities they serve (Lindsey, Robins, Terrell, 2009).
- A Culturally Responsive Leader discusses the challenges in their buildings and/or departments and finds solutions to address them. They tackle the challenges of race, culture, Special Education (SPED), struggling and vulnerable learners, lack of access, funding, disproportionality, etc.
- Culturally Responsive leadership involves confronting negative stereotypes about students of color and/or difference and about socioeconomic status, ability and creating specific conditions and practices to address the needs of diverse students (Smith, 2012).

Guiding Examples

- Culturally Responsive Teaching: A Reflection Guide (newamerica.org)
- Culturally Responsive Leadership: A Framework for School & School System Leaders - The Leadership Academy
- Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework (nysed.gov)

³Tennessee Leaders for Equity Playbook (tn.gov)
As we implement the roadmap, we will embrace the following guiding principles as the North Star to our approach.

**Part One: Adopt an Equity Mindset**

Here we focus on how school and district leaders can set a foundation for a commitment to equity, align stakeholders on a shared vision for equity, and level-set expectations for how we operationalize equity work.

- **Commit**: Understand equity is a journey that requires collaborative commitments.
- **Collaborate**: Value and prioritize inclusive communication.
- **Frame**: Foster a culture that encourages self-reflection and new perspectives.

**Part Two: Drive Your Equity Plan**

Once our internal and external stakeholders are aligned to the district's vision for equity and the expectations for equity work, our next step is to identify key areas for action and implementation.

- **Nurture**: Provide social and emotional supports to all students and staff.
- **Empathize**: Implement culturally responsive teaching practices.
- **Build**: Replace institutional inequities with innovative supports.
- **Challenge**: Ensure all students are held to high expectations.

**Part Three: Expand Your Equity Vision**

These principles underscore the vital importance of continuing our equity initiative beyond initial launch. These principles build upon research findings regarding the maintenance, refinement, and expansion of district and school based educational equity plans.

- **Support**: Deliver ongoing professional learning opportunities.
- **Listen**: Continually solicit feedback.
- **Persist**: Drive positive change through perseverance.

*mcgraw-hill-equity-principles.pdf
Through our Theory of Change and using our Guiding Principles as a North Star, we will focus our efforts on shifting the system at the classroom, school, and institutional levels. To move the work of educational equity forward it is beneficial to think about this task in the construct of an interconnected system. To help us think about the interconnectedness required to achieve educational equity, we will use the Systems Improvement Map as a guide.

**Classroom:** We start in the classroom, since at the heart of a diverse and equitable school are classes that are academically challenging, culturally connected for all children, and places where equity can take place. The first kind of systemic thinking we apply is to look at the three factors that matter at the instructional core — what teachers do, what the content (curriculum) is, and what the expectations and experiences are for students. It is important to understand how these factors are linked, as shifting one may have a tremendous impact on the others, or it may be necessary to shift each of them to achieve lasting results.

**School:** The second kind of systemic thinking evaluates the way factors outside classrooms affect what goes on inside them. For example, systems and structures like tracking, or discipline approaches that disproportionately affect students of color, are bigger than any one classroom, yet affect all of them.

**Systemic understanding of racism and oppression:**
The third systemic thinking we use is specifically about race – helping people move beyond seeing issues around race in schools as individual phenomena, rather than as systemic or institutional.

In order to fully understand oppression as institutional, it is important to assess how oppression appears within the district. As such, below are the four layers of systemic oppression and how they show up in our public education system:

1. **Individual**

2. **Interpersonal**
   - Positive or negative discourse. Microaggressions. Racialized interactions. Transferred oppression.

3. **Institutional**
   - Biased policies and practices (e.g., in hiring, teaching, discipline, parent-family engagement). Disproportional (e.g., racialized) outcomes and experiences.

4. **Structural**

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5 Reimagining Integration - Diverse and Equitable Schools (harvard.edu)
Our district is currently working to address inequities and our progress will reside along a continuum of time and growth. It is important to examine existing student data, but also to look closely at our current policies, practices, norms, and structures.

This approach will allow us to make connections across these equity indicators and take a systemic view of educational equity. At the foundational level, our indicators are interrelated across four consistent areas of focus:

- **Achievement Status**
- **Social-emotional Supports**
- **Educational Opportunities**
- **Climate and Culture**

To evaluate our current status, it is important to analyze the disparities, barriers, and opportunities at each educational level: Pre-K, K-12, and post secondary. Listed below are snapshots of our equity challenges as well as what to measure to determine disparities:

**Education Level: Pre-K Education**

**Indicators Of Disparities**
1. Access to and participation in high-quality pre-K programs (opportunity)
2. Academic Readiness (outcome)

**What To Measure**
1. Group differences in availability of and participation in licensed pre-K programs
2. Group differences in reading, literacy, numeracy, and math skills

**Education Level: K-12 Education**

**Indicators Of Disparities**
1. Access to effective teaching (opportunity)
2. Access to rigorous coursework (opportunity)
3. Curricular breadth (opportunity)
4. Access to high-quality academic supports (opportunity)
5. Students’ exposure to racial, ethnic, and economic segregation (opportunity)
6. School climate (opportunity)
7. Non-exclusionary discipline practices (opportunity)
8. Non-academic supports for student success (opportunity)
9. Engagement in schooling (outcome)
10. Performance in coursework (outcome)
11. Performance on assessments (outcome)

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*Building Educational Equity Indicator Systems: A Guidebook for States and School Districts | The National Academies Press (nap.edu)*
What To Measure

1. Group differences in exposure to novice or experienced teachers
2. Racial and ethnic diversity of the teaching force
4. Group differences in availability of and enrollment in coursework in the arts, social sciences, sciences, technology, and world languages
5. Group differences in access to and participation in formalized systems of tutoring or other types of academic supports, including special education services and services for English learners
6. Group differences in exposure to concentrated poverty in schools
7. Extent of racial segregation within and across schools
8. Group differences in access to strong climates, as measured by perceptions of safety, academic support, academically focused culture, and teacher-student trust
9. Group differences in out-of-school suspensions and expulsions
10. Group differences in supports for emotional, behavioral, mental, and physical health
11. Group differences in school attendance, absenteeism, and academic engagement
12. Group difference in success in classes, accumulating credits, grades, and grade-point averages (GPAs)
13. Group differences in achievement levels and learning growth in reading, math, and science

Indicators Of Disparities

1. On-time graduation (outcome)
2. Postsecondary Readiness (outcome)

Indicators Of Disparities

1. Group differences in on-time graduation
2. Group differences in enrollment in college, entry into workforce, or enlistment in the military
3. Group differences in applications to, four-year colleges and scholarship awards.
Within our current structure, we have identified several systemic policies, practices, and programs that create barriers to our shared goal to create educational equity. These barriers are listed below.

**Student Assignments**
- Homogenous Groupings

**Classroom Assignments**
- Disproportionality in Academic Placement and all enrichment Courses
- Disproportionality in Special Education

**Cultural Awareness, Proficiency Of Staff And/Or Students Is Limited**
- Lack of proficiency of staff w/ various student subgroups
- Lack of proficiency of students’ cultural awareness
- Lack of proficiency of community’s cultural awareness

**Staff Does Not Mirror Diversity Of Student Population**

**Discipline/Suspension Practices**
- Disproportionality by student subgroups

**Student Disengagement And Marginalization In Various Subgroups**
- Marginalization of student voice leadership, advocacy, self-agency
- Lack of pathways of engagement for families in student academic success and decision-making

**Data Analysis At The School Level**
- Non-uniformity in utilizing data for decision-making
- Data use is underutilized or misguided - reinforcing misperceptions vs. challenging perceptions

**Leadership – Struggles To Define AndRespond To Equity Challenges**
- Proficiency of leaders to lead for equity through an equity lens

**Data Sources And Methods**
- District data systems
- District surveys
- Student focus groups
- Surveys
- Key stakeholder interviews
- Classroom observations
Equity Lens for District-Wide and School-Based Decision-Making

An equity lens is a metaphor to communicate the idea of looking at an event, experience, and/or a set of data through a keen and intentional perspective. The purpose of our equity lens is to clearly articulate and align the shared goals and values we have for our District; the intentional policies, investments, and systemic continuum of change we are committing to in order to reach our goals of an equitable educational system; and to create clear, aligned and transparent accountability structures to ensure we are actively making progress and course correcting where there is not progress.

The elements of our equity lens provide a descriptive, conceptual understanding of what equity work requires of individuals and groups and of how we can think and act in service of our students, especially those most impacted by inequity and historic marginalization.

An equity lens is a valuable tool that helps create conditions that enable students to develop and grow as they advance toward our district-wide goals. By utilizing an equity lens in our planning and decision-making processes and procedures, MNPS seeks to operationalize a common vocabulary and protocol for resource allocation, partnerships, engagement, and strategic initiatives to support students and communities.

Through the analysis of yourself personally, professionally, and institutionally through the use of an equity lens, as leaders in education we will be able to better understand where we, our schools and departments need to go in efforts to create an equitable school experience for every student.

EXAMPLE 1

For any policy, program, practice, decision, or action, consider the following questions:

1. Who are the underrepresented groups affected by this policy, program, practice, decision, or action? What are the potential impacts on these groups?

2. Does the decision being made ignore or worsen existing disparities or produce other unintended consequences? What is the impact on eliminating the opportunity gap?

3. How have you intentionally involved stakeholders who are also members of the communities affected by this policy, program, practice, decision, or action? Can you validate your assessment in question No. 1 having considered these stakeholder reactions included in question No. 2?

4. What are the barriers to more equitable outcomes (e.g., mandated, political, emotional, financial, programmatic, or managerial)?

5. How will you mitigate the negative impacts and address the barriers identified above?
An equity lens can be organized to address different decisions. The standard elements, however, ask for decision makers to consider equity dimensions of involvement, process, values, assumptions and outcomes from a perspective that highlights how practices hold potential to shift power toward equity and inclusion.

### What are typical questions in an Equity Lens?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>What decision is being made?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>What beliefs, values, and assumptions (some of which will be cultural) guide how the topic is being considered.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>2</th>
<th>Who is at the table?</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Who or what informs their thinking on the issue?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Who is most affected by these decisions and thus should be at the table?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>How can stakeholders be included?</td>
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<tr>
<th>3</th>
<th>How is the decision made?</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>What participatory structures can be added or hear more voices, to equalize participation, and ensure elements of consensus are used?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| 4 | What assumptions are at the foundation of the issue? Be explicit in naming these and the values and cultural bases for them. |

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<tr>
<th>5</th>
<th>What is the impact?</th>
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<tr>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>Does the policy, program, or decision improve, worsen, or make no change to existing disparities?</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>Does it result in a systemic change that addresses institutional equity?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>Does the policy, program, or decision produce any intentional benefits or unintended consequences for affected groups?</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>What is the real impact likely to be for different groups who are important to the organization?</td>
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Liberatory Thinking

Definition
Liberatory thinking is the reimagining of one’s assumptions and beliefs about others and their capabilities by interrupting internal beliefs that undermine productive relationships and actions.

- Liberatory thinking goes beyond simply changing mindsets to creating concrete opportunities for others to experience liberation. The opportunities provide cover for and center underrepresented and marginalized people. It pushes people to interrogate their own multiple identities in relation to others and to think about the consequences of our actions, especially for students of critical need. It explores how mindsets can impede or ignite progress in the classroom, school, and district.
- Liberatory thinking lifts up and institutionalizes culturally relevant and sustaining opportunities that celebrate students’ identities and offer positive developmental experiences.
- Liberatory thinking pushes us to think about what we want for students as a result of equity - beyond only working to stop the negative consequences of inequity.
- Liberatory thinking requires working toward a common vision for equity and racial justice.
- Liberatory thinking appreciates and honors the differences among people, which include but are not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, language, learning path, accessibility needs, family background, family income, citizenship, or tribal status.

In-Practice
Those who use liberatory thinking:

- Broaden how they interpret data to be inclusive of student experiences instead of creating exclusionary practices.
- Engage in deep reflective work to understand their biases, multiple intersecting identities, and personal stories.
- Examine how they have been impacted by structural racism or systematic oppression while considering how they might be unintentionally perpetuating these conditions.
- Disrupt historical ways of using data on assessment outcomes to compare students to dominant groups.
- Develop individual and systemic equity purpose statements to guide decision-making.
- Build relationships in affinity and across difference to lead change toward greater equity.
- Advocate for fair treatment and opportunities for others.
- Engage in courageous conversations on racial equity, internal biases, systemic inequities, and system redesign, including rethinking how they use data and how data impact student experiences.
- Manage privilege and bias by acknowledging and mitigating personal unconscious bias.
- Set conditions for safe/brave spaces where both healing and interruption can occur. Push to include diverse affirming (positive) traditions, cultural lived experiences, and culturally relevant curriculum in school life.

Elements of an Equity Lens

Inclusive Partnerships

Definition
Inclusive partnerships value and prioritize the diverse voices of students, families, caregivers, and communities when making decisions that affect their lived experiences. This relationship requires the people and institutions who hold power to account for past inequities and to create conditions for healing and co-design an equitable future.

In the process of creating inclusive partnerships, an equity leader will always acknowledge and recognize communities and cultures and will leverage their solutions and ideas for shared benefit. The outcome of the engagement process will be both authentic engagement and diversity, as well as more equitable decisions.
We prioritize three key stakeholder groups:

- People with institutional or historical memory,
- People most impacted by inequity, and
- People responsible for implementing and driving change.

Prioritizing the voices of those with the most critical needs by providing accessible, authentic and collaborative experiences in schools, communities, online, and beyond furthers transparency and power sharing.

Inclusive partnerships bring together a diverse array of stakeholders to engage in authentic, collaborative experiences and co-design community-centered solutions to complex and challenging issues caused and upheld by systemic oppression.

Internal partners include students, caregivers, school, district staff, and volunteers. External partners include community organizations, research organizations, and funders, among others. All partners must remain committed to sharing power and responsibility as they move toward greater equity.

This requires inviting and allowing students, families, caregivers, and underrepresented employee groups to speak about their needs to inform improvement efforts.

**In-Practice**

Those who catalyze inclusive partnerships:

- **Prioritize the perspectives and voices** of stakeholders with institutional and/or historical memory, those most impacted by inequitable decisions, and those responsible for implementing and driving change.
- **Shift from competition to cooperation mindset** to productively address conflict, promote healing, and rebuild trust, using tools like meeting norms and the Equity CURVE, with much greater transparency in service of students.
- **Listen to diverse stakeholders** to understand how culture, differences, and lived experiences can be leveraged as assets.
- **Engage in ongoing, inclusive partnerships** with those most affected by structural inequity to design and implement a more equitable education system that empowers underrepresented students and adults.
- **Elevate student voice data and opportunities** for student input across the district and city to understand students’ lived experiences on order to make decisions that are made with students for students.
- **Embrace families across Nashville** community areas as allies who engage and inform student learning opportunities, including continuous dialogue about allyship and anti-bias and how to leverage the community’s strengths and assets inside and outside of school.
- **Set high, clear expectations** for all parties to promote trust and transparency. Find ways to include voices and ideas that may have been previously ignored.

**Resource Equity**

**Definition**

The goal of resource equity is to create equitable student experiences in learning ready environments.

- Resource equity means consistently prioritizing and allocating people, time, and money to align with levels of need and opportunity.
- Resource equity recognizes that providing the same amount of resources to students and schools with different lived experiences, assets, and challenges will maintain the status quo of unequal opportunity and achievement. The resources people need vary based on their quality of life and circumstances.
- Resource equity creates opportunities to share resources within a school or institution or across schools to meet the diverse needs of all students.

Advocating for resource equity involves tracking the level of opportunity in relation to performance or impact and creating progressive spending patterns. The levers that impact student experiences occur at all levels of the district, including classrooms, schools, and district departments and offices.

District leaders, school administrators, teachers, and support staff engage in continuous learning to identify ways to disrupt and design their own policies and practices to promote responsive, timely resource equity for students across the district.

Resource equity balances immediate solutions with sustainable, long-term distribution of resources to close opportunity gaps for students.
In-Practice
Those who direct resource equity:

- **Make allocation decisions across schools** and within schools based on data that presents the needs and assets of each community, school, and/or student group—and where they are currently situated within outcomes—to support achieving universal goals.

- **Use a broad range of data**, including qualitative and multi-sector data, to assess the current and future impact of resource distribution in relation to the distribution of opportunity and how each resource corresponds with outcomes.

- **Advocate for equitable resource allocation** in their context or role. Engage in an extensive, sensitive dialogue with an array of stakeholders, building moral, economic, and political will to provide the resources and support to co-construct opportunity and give all students access to the resources, opportunities, and educational rigor they need to succeed.

- **Re-organize themselves** to allocate the time and resources within their control to focus on students and schools in areas of concentrated disadvantage.

- **Facilitate opportunities for schools and networks** to share resources within and between schools, including human capital, materials, and promising practices to address common problems.

- **See themselves as resources with agency** and prioritize students with the most risk factors in their efforts and actions to support schools and communities.

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**Fair Policies and Systems**

**Definition**

Fair policies and systems promote equitable opportunities to reach equal positive academic and socioemotional outcomes for all student and stakeholder groups, with an emphasis on those who are most impacted by structural inequality and inequity.

Fair policies and systems happen after examining the impact of key policies, practices, and budgets on students and communities followed by recommending and implementing actions for change.

All policies require systems within which to operate; not all systems require policies. A system can function equitably with or without policies, and policies can be used to positively impact systems to function equitably for students. To examine policies and systems, we must ask who is burdened by past and present policies and practices and who benefits, in order to chart a future plan to address the impact of inequity and promote access and opportunity.

The impact of inequity can include, and is not limited to, racial predictability of student success, community, and displacement. Because policies and systems exist at the classroom, school, district, and city levels, examining connections between policies and systems is critical for transformation. Continuously improve all policies and systems, with equity and social justice at the center.

**In-Practice**

Those who direct resource equity:

- Examine the impact within their control and explore possible equity-based solutions. Create conditions that foster mutual trust and understanding and help stakeholders at all levels to be accountable for equity.

- Check to see if their efforts marginalize a group of people or cause an undue burden. Ensure inclusion and equal treatment of greatest needs groups in their school context. Find root causes and generate a plan to redesign a policy or system.

- Center policy decisions within students’ lived experiences.

- Inform those who currently hold the power and responsibility to impact the inequity that is uncovered.

- Redesign policies and systems to address the pressing need for racial equity and to meet the needs of those most impacted by inequity. Ask a set of agreed upon questions when assessing any policy or system to reduce bias.

- Monitor the impact of policies and systems to ensure success for all student groups.

- Utilize the strengths of Nashville’s diversity to incorporate the social and cultural capital of its communities in all decision-making.

- Strengthen the links between school, classroom, and home to increase access and opportunity for parents.
To operationalize equity, it will be important to have the following in place:

1. Consistent systems-wide utilization of shifts toward equity decision-making and learning tools
2. Decision-making that is data-informed, both qualitative and quantitative, at every leadership level within MNPS
3. Transparency
4. Authentic collaborative family and community engagement

With the correct assessment support put into action, MNPS can reimagine how we support district staff to:

- Enhance existing and create new best outcome-based policies, practices, and procedures to increase academic opportunities and outcomes for MNPS students by eliminating factors that lead to student group predictability and systems that perpetuate long standing opportunity and achievement gaps.
- Create a continuum of change and knowledge capacity-building assessments that will serve to guide and build the equity knowledge of all staff through the stages of continuous improvement cycle so that equity is a part of every task and project.

Guiding examples for assessment:

- Workbook: ICSD Equity Report Card (tableau.com)
- School System Equity Self-Assessment - The Leadership Academy
- Equity-Audit-2020-accessible.pdf
- RIDES Progress Assessment 11.2.18 (3).pdf
For our schools to create new norms and to directly address constant inequities by eliminating student achievement and opportunity disparities, we need to cultivate a framing of equity that ties together various strategies and focuses them on common goals.

The below framing serves to ensure that individual strategies and initiatives beyond their own purpose be inclusive of other elements and strategies taking place. By applying this framing to equity, our schools can address their context, build understanding of the students, and create transformative learning cultures that guide the effective implementation of best outcome strategies.

For our district to achieve this effort, we will need to address equity across three levels: Personal, Professional, and Institutional. To be successful at operationalizing equity from day to day, success will depend on the educator’s personal connection to the work, the institution’s embrace of systemic change and progress, and the professional practices teachers and administrators implement every day.

Success will depend on the school and/or the system’s ability to embrace this framing that aims to guide all decisions, practices, and policies according to equity. As this happens, educators will begin to observe how a particular leadership effort correlates to the culture and climate of the school and supports developing teacher practice.

- **Personal Equity** guides the process of centering oneself in equity and uncovering one’s own biases, stereotypes, and advantages.
- **Institutional Equity** explores how a school and a school system can overcome institutionalized factors that limit student achievement, especially for students of color and those from diverse backgrounds.
- **Professional Equity** focuses on how efforts to successfully implement equitable practices can ensure individualized support for all students.

Within equitable schools, research and data have observed four common characteristics of equity. These four characteristics are essential to ongoing and successful efforts of any equity-centered school.

- **Expectations** set the bar for high achievement
- **Rigor** provides the skills and learning students need to succeed.
- **Relevancy** connects the learner with the instruction and curriculum.
- **Relationships** help the student believe in the teacher’s high expectations, engage with rigorous curriculum, and respond to the relevancy of the learning.

These equity characteristics encapsulate equity, to symbolize that without these four present in the work for all students, other school improvement efforts might struggle to succeed.

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As we begin to analyze what educational equity looks like, here is our path to framing equity:

1. **Leadership**: In the framing of equity, leadership strategies address district, principal, and teacher leadership needs. Equitable leadership organizes strategies that build vision and direction, drive accountability, sustain innovation, and support systematic equity.

2. **Culture**: In the framing of equity, the strategies that build an inclusive culture focus on both the learning culture of the schools as well as the cultural competency of their educators. Equitable cultural strategies incorporate elements of professional attitudes, racial awareness, a deliberate focus on students, an inclusive environment and collaboration among staff, students and the broader community.

3. **Practice**: In the framing of equity, the practice strategies focus on what teachers do every day in the classroom and how these actions impact student achievement. Effective teaching practice occurs when good pedagogy happens in a context of strong culture and effective leadership. Practice strategies seek to organize effective classroom strategies inherent in quality teaching, including curriculum, teaching skills, assessment, and interventions.

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**PERSONAL**

Example of framing equity questions via PERSONAL strategies for educators and administrators:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Culture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>List personal strategies you <strong>already</strong> use to build your own cultural competency and positive learning culture:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>List personal strategies you <strong>already</strong> use to deliver equitable instruction for students:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>List personal strategies you <strong>could</strong> use to deliver equitable instruction for students:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Personal

Example of framing equity questions via PERSONAL strategies for educators and administrators:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>List personal strategies you <em>already</em> use to be an effective leader for equity:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List personal strategies you <em>could</em> use to be an effective leader of equity:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Institutional

Example of framing equity questions via INSTITUTIONAL Strategies for educators and administrators:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Culture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>List institutional strategies your institution <em>already</em> uses to build your own cultural competency and positive learning culture:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List institutional strategies your institution <em>could</em> use to build cultural competency and a positive learning culture:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>List institutional strategies your institution <em>already</em> uses to deliver equitable instruction for students:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List institutional strategies your institution <em>could</em> use to deliver equitable instruction for students:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>List institutional strategies your institution <em>already</em> uses to develop effective leaders for equity:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List institutional strategies your institution <em>could</em> use to develop effective leaders for equity:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Example of framing equity questions via **PROFESSIONAL** Strategies for educators and administrators:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Culture</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>List professional strategies you and/or your school currently use to create a safe and supportive learning environment:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>List professional strategies you and/or your school could use to create a safe and supportive learning environment:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Practice</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>List professional strategies you and/or your school currently use to help you implement effective instructional practices:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>List institutional strategies your institution could use to deliver equitable instruction for students:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Leadership</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>List professional strategies you and/or your school currently use to empower you as a professional educator:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>List professional strategies you and/or your school could use to empower you as a professional educator:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**EXAMPLE #1 — FRANKFORD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**
Example of a case study of Frankford Elementary School utilizing the above framing to operationalize equity:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Culture</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal Strategies</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|  | • Change culture toward high expectations for all.  
  | • Courageously evaluate and share educators’ weaknesses.  |
| **Institutional Strategies** |  |
|  | • Incorporate PLC’s for all teachers to build collaboration.  
  | • Outreach to the community resulting in over 100 mentors.  |
| **Professional Strategies** |  |
|  | • Create individual education plans for every student, whether a high, low, or average performer.  
  | • Empower teachers to understand individual student learning needs.  |
**EXAMPLE #1 — FRANKFORD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**
Example of a case study of Frankford Elementary School utilizing the above framing to operationalize equity:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Personal Strategies** | • Expect teachers to master instructional strategies.  
• Fine-tune daily practice and problem solving in instruction. |
| **Institutional Strategies** | • Provide professional development that models strategies across the school.  
• Implement rigorous standards-based instruction. |
| **Professional Strategies** | • Implement individual student learning plans with fidelity.  
• Share effective pedagogical practices in teams and across grade levels. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Personal Strategies** | • Challenge teachers to change their level of expectations for students.  
• Facilitate procedure for teachers to no longer be isolated in their practice. |
| **Institutional Strategies** | • Clearly communicate learning goals to faculty, students, and the community.  
• Disseminate knowledge of school improvement strategies among staff. |
| **Professional Strategies** | • Provide professional development that disseminates best practices of teachers within the school.  
• Provide support to all teachers in improving their practice. |

**EXAMPLE #2 — SANGER UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**
Example of a case study of Sanger Unified School District using the above framing to operationalize equity:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Culture</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Personal Strategies** | • Examine what failure meant for the students.  
• Strongly support personal capacity building of teachers. |
| **Institutional Strategies** | • Implement PLC’s at every school and every team.  
• Implement culturally responsive programs such as those for ELL’s. |
| **Professional Strategies** | • Schedule and support teacher collaboration.  
• Empower teachers to understand individual student learning needs. |
**EXAMPLE #2 — SANGER UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**
Example of a case study of Sanger Unified School District using the above framing to operationalize equity:

### Practice

| **Personal Strategies** | • Support teachers in effectively instructing all students daily.  
|                         | • Expect teachers to master instructional strategies. |
| **Institutional Strategies** | • Implement RTI with Tier 3 instruction in every school.  
|                          | • Implement rigorous standards-based instruction. |
| **Professional Strategies** | • Intensely and regularly analyze student data based on team-developed assessment.  
|                             | • Share effective pedagogical practices in teams, across grade levels, and between schools. |

### Leadership

| **Personal Strategies** | • Take personal responsibility for achievement - for administrators and teachers alike.  
|                         | • Support administrators and teachers if they engage in change effort and hold accountable if resistant. |
| **Institutional Strategies** | • Establish interschool collaboration and competition.  
|                          | • Establish districtwide goals and focus. |
| **Professional Strategies** | • Focus professional development on formative assessment to allow educators to effectively use data.  
|                             | • Institutionalize systematic programs like PLC’s and RTI in every school. |
Within our roadmap approach, educators and administrators must know the students they teach, understand which pedagogies and resources each student needs to thrive, and remain attuned to how quantitative and qualitative data reflect this. Our work of adapting teaching and learning must adhere to a “do now and build towards” equity mindset shift. Our “do now” actions are the practical, in the near-term actions designed to lay the foundation for bold and transformative work to follow - what we call the “build toward” outcomes. This sets the North Star vision which chronicles how students, families, and educators will experience school post COVID-19. Each of the domains within our roadmap approach are listed below:

Culturally Responsive Teaching And Learning

Schoolwide Systems And Institutionalized Structures

Family, Caregiver And Community Partnerships

District Policy, Practices And Procedures

Support Hub Commitment To Racial Educational Equity

Below, each domain of focus has suggested MNPS commitments that align with our core tenets. Each core commitment also includes actionable core practices or policy actions.

Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning

Commitments:

1. Ensure each school has systems in place to support students in becoming transition-ready.
2. Facilitate community building, routines, and rituals that reduce stress, address trauma, promote healing and belonging, and prepare the brain for learning.
3. Ensure each school is inclusive of culturally relevant curriculum and embracing the pedagogy of equity in the classroom.
5. Represent, affirm, and support students to explore their personal, cultural, racial, and academic identities and proactively dispel stereotypes.
6. Provide frequent, formative, growth-oriented feedback that affirms high academic expectations and supports for all students.
7. Ensure every student has access to college- and career-oriented instruction.
8. Ensure every student has access to academic supports they need to learn and excel academically.

*Dimensions | Alliance for Resource Equity (educationresourceequity.org)
Core Practices and Policies:

- Utilize opening and closing routines to begin and end class lessons to demonstrate care and interest for students.
- Provide guided breathing and movement breaks.
- Build culturally sustaining and responsive learning environments.
- Engage in healing-centered practices, also known as trauma-informed practices.
- Engage students in value affirmation activities.
- Provide classroom opportunities for student leadership and student-taught lessons.
- Provide rich opportunities for civic education and engagement.
- Provide student choice in what students learn, how they engage in learning, and/or how they demonstrate their learning.
- Incorporate examples from students’ communities and cultural groups in every curriculum unit.
- Use short surveys to regularly solicit student feedback on classroom learning conditions.
- Set high standards for all students and then give actionable critical feedback along with reassurance.
- Share models of high-quality work to communicate expectations for excellence.
- Provide opportunities for high-quality project-based learning.

Schoolwide Systems and Institutionalized Structures

Commitments:

1. All school efforts, structures, resources, and people align around a clear, schoolwide vision of equitable learning and development and a shared understanding of why and how this drives everyone’s work.
2. School and classroom spaces are inviting, are physically and emotionally safe, and support learning and engagement of all stakeholders.
3. Professional processes, structures, and cultures build the individual and collective efficacy of educators and staff while supporting their personal well-being and providing opportunities for ongoing inquiry and critical reflection.
4. The goals of discipline policies and practices are to support student learning and development and to repair and/or restore their community, rather than to punish or exclude students.
5. Time and learning opportunities are flexibly designed and organized to prioritize student experience and learning goals, including cultivating supportive relationships and authentic learning.
6. School structures and practices promote student leadership and agency.
7. Provide training for staff to positively impact disproportionality (e.g., implicit bias, cultural competence, trauma-informed, social-emotional, restorative practices, etc.).
8. Provide differentiated supports for schools to better serve students of color and other marginalized groups.
9. Engage students, families, and the community in conversations to improve the culture and climate in schools and district offices, particularly for students and families of color.

Core Practices and Policies:

- Engage in a structured process to interrogate and align school personnel, systems, and budgets around a shared set of values and principles, e.g., Summit Public School’s Aligned School Model framework.
- Invest in growth-oriented professional development based on adult learning principles that is sustained, supportive, job-embedded, team-based, and student-centered.
- Recruit, hire, and retain a diverse faculty and staff that is representative of and culturally and emotionally attuned to the students in the building.
- Structure time in the school day for frequent teacher collaboration and professional learning, e.g., by grade level, content area, and/or student cohort.
- Establish mentoring and leadership development opportunities for interested teachers, administrators, and other staff members.
- Use tools to support educators’ mindful reflection and self-assessment for bias (e.g., the Mindful Reflection Protocol for Checking Unconscious Bias).
- Provide educators with models, protocols, and opportunities for practice for any new endeavor.
- Structure opportunities for teacher and staff teams to meet regularly to review individual student data and develop individualized responses and supports.
- Regularly collect, review, and act upon student experience, parent satisfaction, and school community climate data to inform and contextualize traditional academic data.
- Hold regular events for families and other community stakeholders to collect and make sense of data together.
Commitments:
1. Families and school staff work in authentic partnerships to develop and advance a shared definition of student success.
2. Families and school staff build meaningful relationships that foster mutual trust, understanding, and appreciation across cultures and other differences.
3. Share information and resources and collaborate across schools, families, and community partners in support of student learning and development.
4. Families and community members co-design schools so policies and practices are equitable and support students.
5. Engage parents and business partners to provide proactive social supports that meet student needs.
6. Review budgets to ensure equity through an equity lens tool.
7. Identify and place more students of color in all areas of advanced coursework.

Family, Caregiver and Community Partnerships

Commitments:
1. Families and school staff work in authentic partnerships to develop and advance a shared definition of student success.
2. Families and school staff build meaningful relationships that foster mutual trust, understanding, and appreciation across cultures and other differences.
3. Share information and resources and collaborate across schools, families, and community partners in support of student learning and development.
4. Families and community members co-design schools so policies and practices are equitable and support students.
5. Engage parents and business partners to provide proactive social supports that meet student needs.
6. Review budgets to ensure equity through an equity lens tool.
7. Identify and place more students of color in all areas of advanced coursework.

Core Practices and Policies:
- Create regular/predictable opportunities for families and other community stakeholders to actively contribute to the school’s vision, priorities, and practices.
- Implement student-led conferences to build partnerships and affirm shared notions of student success.
- Provide space for teachers and staff to process and determine how to engage with students and families after social and political events that impact the wider community.
- Support intentional paraprofessional or volunteer programs to increase school community partnerships to support student learning.
- Co-design and organize proactive community-building activities that promote positive relationships across roles and lines of difference (families, partners, local business owners, neighbors, artists, healers, and others).
- Co-design formal and informal structures and processes for educators and families to share relevant information.
- Hold regular community and family discussion groups and workshops.
- Include families and community representatives on all standing school council/leadership teams.
- Build and support formal structures for family and community leadership.

District Policy, Practices, and Procedures

Commitments:
1. Attract and retain a diverse and high-quality staff through creative and innovative partnerships.
2. Provide opportunities for career exploration and advancement starting in middle school and continuing throughout.
3. Support schools’ efforts to impact staff diversity through training and technical assistance.
4. System goals and aligned accountability policies focus on equitable whole student learning development.
5. Policies and resource allocation promote the development of school environments that support student safety, belonging, agency, and effective learning environments.
6. Structures and requirements are in place to ensure authentic engagement of students, families, and communities in directing state and district policy and practice.
7. Policies and resources support the hiring and development of staff who have the mindsets and skills to build equitable and effective learning environments.
8. Resources are adequate and equitably distributed.

Core Practices and Policies:

• Adopt policies to support integrated social, emotional, and academic development (e.g., Aspen Institute policy recommendations).
• Review data to understand where different student groups and communities are relative to the universal goals.
• Require and provide culturally responsive, identity-affirming, and rigorous curriculum and pedagogy.
• Advance structures, schedules, and staffing that allow for the establishment of positive relationships and provide personalized instruction and engagement.
• Adopt discipline policies that are restorative, empathic, and student-centered.
• Provide adequate resources and staff training to implement a rigorous ethnic studies curriculum
• Provide and resource student support services, including physical and mental health services - Community Schools model.
• Hire, retain, and develop state, district, and school leaders and staff who are committed to equity and whole student learning and development.
• Allocate resources to districts and schools commensurate with each student’s needs.
• Review site-based expenditure reporting to ensure equitable distribution of funding.
• Require and enable schools to provide high-quality educational experiences for all students.
• Implement school-based budgeting that aligns funds with student needs.
• Provide sufficient flexibility at the school level to allow schools to be responsive to community priorities consistent with the goals of equitable learning environments and whole student development.
• Prioritize wraparound services in schools in high-poverty neighborhoods.

Support Hub Commitment to Racial Educational Equity

Commitments:

1. Support schools by providing training on the equity scorecard and helping principals design school-level equity plans.
2. Enhance current policy and procedures that address elements of diversity, yet not equity or inclusion.
3. State and district data and accountability systems support site-level equity-focused continuous improvement processes and procedures.
4. School leaders are held accountable for advancing these commitments while being given the autonomy and ownership to find the site-appropriate path to fulfill these commitments.

Core Practices and Policies:

• Conduct an equity audit to understand the policies and structures limiting access to opportunity and causing harm.
• Conduct Race and Equity Impact Assessment for all policies and decision making.
• Develop policies that consider the ways different groups of students and communities have differential access to opportunity and implement policies that dismantle and/or mitigate structural barriers to opportunity.
• Periodically audit policies and practices to identify and eliminate structural barriers to opportunity and those that harm the experiences, opportunities, or outcomes of students, staff, and families of color.
• Increase hiring and retention of educators of color through improved incentives and conditions for teachers of color; focus on robust local pipeline development.
• Fund ongoing job-embedded coaching to support educators in developing the technical and relational skills needed to be effective, culturally responsive, and affirming.
• Establish regular collection and analysis of student outcome, student experience, and school climate data that are disaggregated by race, ethnicity, socioeconomic level, gender identity, sexual orientation, English learner status, immigration status, and different ability status.
• Allocate systems, time, and expertise to develop and implement action plans in response to data analysis.

Guiding examples

• Home – BELE (belenetwork.org)
• Dimensions | Alliance for Resource Equity (educationresourceequity.org)
# Equity On-Ramps Evaluation

As we begin our collective equity journey, we must be certain to do the following:

The goal of resource equity is to create equitable student experiences in learning ready environments.

- Prepare our system to engage in work that can be complex, often emotional, and challenges our most basic assumptions.
- Leadership at all levels must communicate the importance, enthusiasm, and the challenges associated with this work toward equity shifts to staff: personal work and institutional work.
- Gather and explore relevant disaggregated data, both internal and public; especially investigating disproportionality through an intersectional data analysis of the focal student groups: African American students, students with disabilities, English learners, and economically disadvantaged students.

Read through the MNPS Equity Roadmap, identifying areas of focus. The below on-ramps should be used to help identify where a team/school is on their journey, their objectives, and how to potentially proceed. Utilize this tool as a self-assessment and inventory of actions, as each component can be essential to designing and operationalizing the work of educational equity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Starting Point</th>
<th>Picking Up Momentum</th>
<th>Merging into Equity Shifts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leadership Development</strong></td>
<td>Learn about equity in our system</td>
<td>Dive into planning for equity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Establish a core leadership team that will identify and develop a broader site-based equity leadership team</td>
<td>• Establish a broader, representative equity leadership team across stakeholder groups</td>
<td>• Ensure that representative stakeholders are participants at all levels of process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify trainings/education for leadership team on systemic racism &amp; implicit bias</td>
<td>• Leadership team engages in an equity assessment</td>
<td>• Continue equity literature book circles/equity discussions with all staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Take implicit bias assessment</td>
<td>• Develop smaller leadership teams for specific areas of work (ongoing)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Explore equity literature for future book circles</td>
<td>• Identify an equity team facilitator who is available, consistent, and experienced</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Establish community agreements/norms</td>
<td>• Initiate equity literature book circles/equity discussions with all staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Teacher/Staff Development</strong></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Take implicit bias assessment</td>
<td>• Reflect on results of implicit bias assessment; consider next steps for individuals and collective action based on results</td>
<td>• Continued, focused trainings/education for teachers on addressing systemic racism &amp; implicit bias through effective pedagogy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Participate in training/education on systemic racism &amp; implicit bias</td>
<td>• Further focus training/education for teachers on systemic racism &amp; implicit bias</td>
<td>• Continue equity literature book circles/equity discussions with all staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Explore equity literature for future book circles (see resources)</td>
<td>• Initiate equity literature book circles/equity discussions with all staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data and Research</td>
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<td>-------------------</td>
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<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Needs assessment: Investigate Dashboard data of districts/schools using data exploration protocol Identify focal student groups • Needs assessment: Survey teachers, staff, parents, students and other stakeholders • Explore equity audits/assessments to use in your context</td>
<td>• Continue to collect relevant quantitative and qualitative data at the local and state levels Conduct intersectional data analysis for disproportionality Conduct root cause analysis</td>
<td>• Continue to collect and share relevant quantitative and qualitative data • Continue to conduct intersectional data analysis for disproportionality, with attention to African American students, SWD and ELs • Plan cycles of research and measurement for improvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify and broadly define equity challenges Begin to draft equity goals that explicitly address inequities found in needs assessment Develop a timeline starting with these on-ramps and cycles of continuous improvement</td>
<td>• Develop shared definition of equity Define and prioritize your equity goals Choose set of tools to address the challenge based on defined equity goals Begin drafting an equity plan (made up of report of findings, tools, strategies, communication plan, plan to monitor progress)</td>
<td>• Narrow focus to one equity challenge, drawing on stakeholder input • Finalize equity plan • Initiate and continue use of equity tools and strategies • Check for integrity of the equity plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify stakeholders Begin development of communication plan</td>
<td>• Continue to develop communication plan Share equity data with community of stakeholders</td>
<td>• Finalize communication plan • Communicate the equity plan to stakeholders • Continue to share data findings and open conversations with stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate and Culture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Calibrate potential equity goals to mission and vision Begin process of ongoing personal reflection</td>
<td>• Align equity objectives to mission and vision Continue ongoing personal reflection Include students and community representation in decision-making and work</td>
<td>• Check for and build student and community representation in decision-making and work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progress Monitoring</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Check in with teachers and staff about their response to the equity focus</td>
<td>• Continue monitoring equity and representativeness of leadership team</td>
<td>• Monitor progress: Schedule regular meetings (every 2-4 weeks) Monitor leadership capacity-building</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Common Language to Foster Common Understanding**

This common language was adapted alongside the PASSAGE Anti-Racist Curriculum and Advanced Academics Working Group, the New Skills Ready Equity Working Group and other internal stakeholders. We drew from The Oregon Equity Lens and the Aspen Institute’s Glossary for Promoting Racial Equity as a foundational guide. Some definitions we adopted without change. We revised other definitions collaboratively.

**Structural Racism:** A system in which public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations, and other norms work in various, often reinforcing, ways to perpetuate racial group inequity. It identifies dimensions of our history and culture that have allowed privileges associated with “whiteness” and disadvantages associated with “color” to endure and adapt over time. Structural racism is not something that a few people or institutions choose to practice. Instead it has been a feature of the social, economic and political systems in which we all exist.

**Systemic Racism:** In many ways “systemic racism” and “structural racism” are synonymous. If there is a difference between the terms, it can be said to exist in the fact that a structural racism analysis pays more attention to the historical, cultural and social psychological aspects of our currently racialized society.

**Institutional Racism:** Institutional racism refers to the historical and current policies and practices within and across institutions that, intentionally or not, produce outcomes that chronically favor, or put a racial group at a disadvantage. Poignant examples of institutional racism can be found in school disciplinary policies in which students of color are punished at much higher rates than their white counterparts, in the criminal justice system, and within many employment sectors in which day-to-day operations, as well as hiring and firing practices can significantly disadvantage Black people, Indigenous people, and people of color.

**Individual Racism:** Individual racism includes face-to-face or covert actions toward a person that intentionally express prejudice, hate or bias based on race.

**Racial Equity:** Racial equity refers to what a genuinely anti-racist society would look like. In racially equitable societies, the distribution of society’s benefits and burdens would not be skewed by race. Racial equity would be a reality in which a person is no more or less likely to experience society’s benefits or burdens because of the color of their skin. Racial equity holds society to a higher standard. It demands that we pay attention not just to individual-level discrimination, but to overall social outcomes.

**Educational Equity:** In education, equity is the notion that every learner receives the necessary resources to thrive. A child’s race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, their first language or whether he or she is differently abled would not determine access to educational success.

**White Privilege:** White privilege, or “historically accumulated white privilege” refers to whites’ historical and contemporary advantages in access to quality education, decent jobs, livable wages, homeownership, retirement benefits, wealth, and other advantages to the detriment of Black people, Indigenous people, and people of color. “As a white person I had been taught about racism that puts others at a disadvantage, but had been taught not to see one of its corollary aspects, white privilege, which puts me at an advantage... “White privilege is an invisible package of unearned assets which I can count on cashing in every day, but about which I was meant to remain oblivious.” (McIntosh, 1988)

**Embedded Racial Inequality:** Embedded racial inequalities are easily produced and reproduced—usually without the intention of doing so and without even a reference to race. These can be policies and practices that intentionally and unintentionally enable white privilege to be reinforced.

**Historically Marginalized Students:** Students whom systems have historically denied opportunities because the systems have operationalized deficit-based thinking. Deficit thinking is the practice of having lower expectations for certain groups of people based on demographics or characteristics that they share. In doing so, an “at-risk” narrative is formed, in which students navigating poverty, culturally and linguistically diverse students, and/or historically marginalized groups, and their families are pathologized.
and marginalized. This includes students who are treated differently because of their gender, race, sexual orientation, gender identity, dis/ability, and geographic location. Many students are not served well in our education system because of the conscious and unconscious bias, stereotyping, and racism that is embedded within our current inequitable education system.

**Accountability:** Accountability is primarily instructive and not punitive. Accountability begins with clear expectations provided to all participants in a system. Expectations are aligned with clearly stated and well-developed policies and practices. When expectations are not met, we examine what occurred. Next, constructive feedback is given. Then, coaching and support are provided to assist individuals in meeting expectations. If improvements do not occur after the steps above, corrective measures may be utilized.

**Race:** Race is a social—not biological—construct. We understand the term “race” to mean a racial or ethnic group that is generally recognized in society and often by government. When referring to those groups, we use the terminology of “Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC)” (or refer to a specific racial and/or ethnic group) and “white.” We also understand that racial and ethnic categories differ internationally, and that many local communities are international communities. In some societies, ethnic, religious and caste groups are oppressed and racialized. These dynamics can occur even when the oppressed group is numerically in the majority.

**Ethnicity:** Ethnicity refers to the social characteristics that people may have in common, such as language, religion, regional background, culture, foods, etc. Ethnicity is revealed by the traditions one follows, a person’s native language, and so on. Race, on the other hand, describes categories assigned to demographic groups based mostly on observable physical characteristics, like skin color, hair texture and eye shape.

**Diversity:** Diversity has come to refer to the various backgrounds and races that comprise a community, nation or other grouping. Difference. Can include life experiences, education, work style, personality, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status and class, gender identity, sexual orientation, country of origin, ability, traditions, heritage, perspectives, as well as cultural, political, religious, and other affiliations.

**Cultural Representations:** Cultural representations refer to popular stereotypes, images, frames and narratives that are socialized and reinforced by media, language and other forms of mass communication and “common sense.” Cultural representations can be positive or negative, but from the perspective of the dismantling structural racism analysis, too often cultural representations depict BIPOC in ways that are dehumanizing, perpetuate inaccurate stereotypes, and have the overall effect of allowing unfair treatment within the society to seem fair or “natural.”

**Disproportionality:** Over-representation of students of color in areas that impact their access to educational attainment. This term is a statistical concept that actualizes the disparities across student groups. Progress & Retrenchment: This term refers to the pattern in which progress is made through the passage of legislation, court rulings and other formal mechanisms that aim to promote racial equality. Brown v. Board of Education and the Fair Housing Act are two prime examples of such progress. But retrenchment refers to the ways in which this progress is often challenged, neutralized or undermined. In many cases, after a measure is enacted that can be counted as progress, significant backlashes —retrenchment— develop in key public policy areas.

**Opportunity Gap:** The lack of opportunity that many social groups face in our common quest for educational attainment and the shift of attention from the current overwhelming emphasis on schools in discussions of the opportunity gap to more fundamental questions about social and educational opportunity. We intentionally use the term “opportunity gap” rather than “achievement gap.” “Achievement gap” incorrectly places the responsibility for the gap on students rather than systems.

**Culturally Responsive School Communities:** Culturally responsive schools recognize and honor the diverse cultural characteristics of all stakeholders (teachers, staff, students, families, leadership) in the community as assets. Culturally responsive communities empower all stakeholders intellectually, socially, emotionally and politically by using culturally relevant and meaningful referents to embed knowledge and support diverse skills and attitudes. In culturally responsive schools, differences are honored to foster inclusivity and drive the formation of a participatory culture and a sense of civic responsibility for our community at large.

**Root Cause:** The deepest underlying cause or causes of positive or negative symptoms within any process that, if dissolved, would result in elimination or substantial reduction of the symptom.

**Inclusion:** The intentional act to include difference. Creating environments in which any individual or group is welcomed, respected, supported, and valued, and has an opportunity to fully participate.

**Implicit Bias:** Also known as unconscious or hidden bias, implicit biases are negative associations people unknowingly hold. They are expressed automatically, without conscious awareness. Many studies have indicated implicit biases affect individuals’ attitudes and actions, thus creating real-world implications, even though individuals might not even be aware those biases exist within themselves.

**Equity Shifts:** Shifts in the mindset and practice that set the foundation for providing and sustaining equitable outcomes for all students. These shifts require acknowledging current, deep-seated mindsets about race and culture.
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Learning for Justice – Learning for Justice provides free resources to educators—teachers, administrators, counselors and other practitioners—who work with children from kindergarten through high school. Educators use their materials to supplement the curriculum, to inform their practices, and to create civil and inclusive school communities where children are respected, valued and welcome participants.

The Nonprofit Association of Oregon Equity and Inclusion Guide – This comprehensive handbook helps staff and management of municipalities view their planning and program development and delivery activities to ensure they are inclusive of the full diversity of residents.

K-12 Equity Directors: Configuring the Role for Impact – This brief draws from qualitative interviews we conducted with 13 practicing equity directors from districts across the United States. Since 2016, we have been studying equity directors - who they are, what they do and how- the districts that employ them, and the constraints and affordances of their roles. This series of research briefs informs community and district-based stakeholders about this emerging district leadership role.

¡Colorín Colorado! – The premier national website serving educators and families of English language learners (ELLs) in Grades PreK-12. Colorín Colorado has been providing free research-based information, activities, and advice to parents, schools, and communities around the country for more than a decade.

Seizing the Moment: A District Guide to Advance Equity Through ESSA - The Aspen Institute – This tool was developed to offer district/system teams with guidance around ensuring equity is advanced through ESSA. Eight major issues are addressed: (1) leveraging school improvement to advance equity (2) ensuring equitable funding (3) increasing access to advanced coursework (4) addressing disproportionate discipline practices (5) increasing access to effective teachers and leaders (6) integrating social, emotional and academic development (7) supporting English learners & (8) improving access to high-quality instructional materials.

1. **THE DIRECT CONFRONTATION PRINCIPLE:** The path to equity requires direct confrontations with inequity — with interpersonal, institutional, cultural, and structural racism and other forms of oppression. “Equity” approaches that fail to directly identify and confront inequity play a significant role in sustaining inequity.

2. **THE EQUITY IDEOLOGY PRINCIPLE:** Equity is more than a list of practical strategies. It is a lens and an ideological commitment. There are no practical strategies that will help us develop equitable institutions if we are unwilling to deepen our understandings of equity and inequity and reject ideologies that are not compatible with equity.

3. **THE PRIORITIZATION PRINCIPLE:** In order to achieve equity, we must prioritize the interests of the students and families whose interests historically have not been prioritized. Every policy, practice, and program decision should be considered through the question, “What impact is this going to have on the most marginalized students and families? How are we prioritizing their interests?”

4. **THE REDISTRIBUTION PRINCIPLE:** Equity requires the redistribution of material, cultural, and social access, and opportunity. We do this by changing inequitable policies, eliminating oppressive aspects of institutional culture, and examining how practices and programs might advantage some students over others. If we cannot explain how our equity initiatives redistribute access and opportunity, we should reconsider them.

5. **THE “FIX INJUSTICE, NOT KIDS” PRINCIPLE:** Educational outcome disparities are not the result of deficiencies in marginalized communities’ cultures, mindsets, or grittiness, but rather of inequities. Equity initiatives focus not on “fixing” students and families who are marginalized but on transforming the conditions that marginalize students and families.

6. **THE ONE SIZE FITS FEW PRINCIPLE:** No individual identity group shares a single mindset, value system, learning style, or communication style. Identity-specific equity frameworks (like group-level “learning styles”) almost always are based on simplicity and stereotypes, not equity.

7. **THE EVIDENCE-INFORMED EQUITY PRINCIPLE:** Equity approaches should be based on evidence for what works rather than trendiness. “Evidence” can mean quantitative research, but it can also mean the stories and experiences of people who are marginalized in your institution.

[https://www.equityliteracy.org/](https://www.equityliteracy.org/)